

ANNUAL REPORT on the Health of the Heysham Urban  
District for 1905.

To the Chairman and Councillors of the Heysham Urban District.

Gentlemen,

I have the honour of presenting my 2nd Annual Report  
on the health and sanitary condition of the Heysham Urban District.

Death Rate.

There were 50 deaths registered in the district, and 4 deaths of residents registered in public institutions outside the district, making a total of 54 deaths belonging to the district. Of these deaths 37 were of males and 17 of females. This gives a death rate of 16.0 per 1000 inhabitants, if we include the deaths of residents occurring outside the district, and if we exclude these the rate would be 14.8 which is 1.5 higher than the rate for this district last year, but is 1.4 less than the rate for England and Wales in 1904. The death rate is considerably increased in this as in many other health resorts by the number of non-residents who die in the district, sometimes after a few days residence, and have to be included in the deaths belonging to the district. I am pleased to say that the infant mortality is much lower than last year, there were 8 deaths of infants under one year, of these 2 were due to premature birth, and of the remaining 6, five died a few days after birth. The rate of infant mortality is 109.5 per 1000 births registered, as compared with 216 for 1904, and is 36.5 less than that for the whole of England and Wales in 1904.

Birth Rate.

Seventy three births were registered during the year, of which 38 were of males and 35 of females. This is a considerable increase on last year, and makes an increase of births over deaths of 19. The birth rate per 1000 inhabitants is 21.6 as compared with 17.7 for last year, but is still 6.3 lower than that for England and Wales in 1904. The reason of the comparatively low birth rate







is undoubtedly due to the fact that there is a much larger proportion of elderly people than in the inland and manufacturing districts.

#### Some of the Chief causes of death.

##### Scarlet Fever.

There was one death from Scarlet Fever which gives a rate of 0.29 per 1000 inhabitants. In this as in most other infectious diseases the danger lies more in the complications which are apt to follow, than in the actual disease itself. The most frequent of these complications are affections of the lungs and kidneys which might often be prevented, if more care were taken to keep the patient at a uniform temperature during the fever and to avoid chills in the desquamation stage.

##### Influenza.

There were 2 deaths from Influenza, both in elderly people. In one at least of these cases a secondary cause was assigned which might in any case have caused death. The death rate from this disease is 0.59.

##### Diarrhoea.

There were 2 deaths from Diarrhoea, one occurring in middle life and the other being 81 years of age. This disease is included in the list of the principal zymotic diseases, which makes the death rate for those diseases 0.88, the rate for diarrhoea being 0.59.

##### Phthisis.

Only one death has been recorded from Pulmonary Phthisis, which gives a rate of 0.29. The County rate for 1904 was 0.90, which makes the rate 0.61 below that of the whole county, this shows the benefit which is derived from residence in a pure, healthy atmosphere, and undoubtedly the greater popularity of seaside resorts, amongst all classes of people has done much to help in the marked decline in the mortality from this disease all over the country. Nevertheless the sanitary condition of the houses and workshops are of the highest importance in preventing the occurrence, and checking the progress of this disease.







There was one death from other tubercular diseases, which makes the rate for all tubercular diseases, including Phthisis 0.59 as compared with 1.38 for the County.

#### Bronchitis and Pneumonia.

There were 6 deaths from bronchitis and one from pneumonia, all with one exception in elderly people. This is a much higher mortality than obtained last year, and gives a rate of 2.9. Probably the longevity of the people has some influence on the high rate of mortality from these diseases as they are much more fatal in elderly people. Another cause is undoubtedly the number of people who come into the district when already suffering from an incurable form of bronchitis.

#### Cancer.

Three deaths occurred from Cancer, and of these, two at least were in an advanced stage of the disease before coming into the district, and had only been in residence a few weeks when death occurred. The death rate from this disease is 0.88.

#### Heart Disease.

Heart disease was the cause of 4 deaths, the rate being 1.18.

#### Accidents.

There were 3 deaths from accidents, all of which occurred at the Harbour Works.

#### Zymotic Diseases.

The number of cases of fever notified during the year was 13, of these 8 were of Scarlet Fever, 4 of Enteric fever, and one of Small Pox. Of these cases 7 were removed to the Isolation Hospital. I am pleased to say that an additional building has been erected during the year, for the isolation of fevers, so that we have now very good accommodation for these cases.

#### Small Pox.

Only one case of small pox occurred during the year, and this was on one of the ships which had just come in from Spain. The Patient was at once removed to the Isolation Hospital and the boat







thoroughly disinfected.

#### Scarlet Fever.

There were 8 cases of Scarlet fever reported during the year, of these 2 occurred in visitors, and could not be traced to any local infection, as they occurred at a time when there were no other cases in the district, one case occurred in a man who had supplied milk to the Fever Hospital, and the remaining 5 were traced to a case which had occurred at Overton and had not been identified until the patient had paid a visit to Heysham, the first of the five cases occurring in the house at which he had been visiting. This <sup>case</sup> shows the importance of consulting a medical man in all cases where desquamation follows any illness, even when no previous rash has been noticed. The only death from scarlet fever was in the child who first took the infection from this unidentified case.

#### Enteric Fever.

There were 4 cases of enteric fever during the year, of these, one was due to contagion from a previous case, and the other 3 were isolated cases for which no cause could be found.

#### Measles.

A few cases of Measles have occurred during the year, but there has been no serious outbreak, and beyond keeping the children in infected houses from attending school, no action was found necessary to prevent the spread of the disease.

#### Other Infectious diseases.

The district has been practically free from all other infectious diseases.

#### Sanitary matters.

The Sanitary condition of the district is on the whole very satisfactory, the streets are kept in good repair, several new streets have been made, and the roads are kept clean, and are plentifully watered during the summer months.

The scavenging is done by the Council in an efficient manner, and the refuse is thrown into disused claypits, on the outskirts of the district. If the Council could see their way to purchase a







refuse destructor, it would be a much more satisfactory way of disposing of the refuse.

House accommodation for the working classes is very good, except in some of the houses in Lower Heysham, I am sorry to say the Council have not seen their way to remedy the insanitary conditions in this part of the district, to which I drew their attention in my last annual report.

The water supply is good and plentiful, and is obtained through the Lancaster Corporation, but a few of the houses in Lower Heysham are still using the water from the pump, it is impossible to keep this free from pollution, and I strongly advise the Council to have the towns water carried to every house in the district. The pump water has not been examined for some time, and I consider that this ought to be done periodically, so long as the water is used for drinking purposes.

The sewerage is carried out into the tidal water, but there are still a few privies and earth closets in use in some parts of the district.

The workshops are kept in good sanitary condition. Two of the Slaughter Houses have been closed, and it would be an advantage if all slaughter houses were taken further from the centre of the district. There is only one underground bakehouse, the light and ventilation in this is very good.

In the report which I made a short time ago on the dairies and cowsheds of the district, I pointed out the defects in the constitution of some of the buildings. I am pleased to say that the Council are taking steps to remedy these defects, and one cowshed has been closed.

I remain,

Mr. Chairman & Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant

Richard Herd. B.A. B.C. Cantab. L.S.A.

Medical Officer of Health,

Heysham Urban District Council



